

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

February 7th, 2014

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. medal	a) person or company that gives money and support to someone
	2. bobsleigh	b) attract people; have people's focus
	3. get attention	c) a person who has a business
	4. inspire	d) in any case; anyhow
	5. sponsor	e) amount of money or value something has
	6. deal	f) to give someone an idea or motivation
	7. worth	g) to put your signature on something; to complete a contract
	8. owner	h) prize for winning a competition
	9. anyway	i) an agreement
	10. sign	j) a covered metal sled that goes down an icy track

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. The _____ winter Olympics have begun in Sochi, Russia.	a) twenty second b) twentieth
2. Four years ago, Canada won _____ medals at the winter Olympics.	a) 14 goal b) 14 gold
3. The movie <i>Cool Runnings</i> was about _____ in the 1988 Olympics.	a) Jamaica's bobsleigh team b) Calgary's bobsleigh team
4. An Albertan oilsands company was inspired by the movie to _____ the Jamaican team in Russia.	a) sponsor b) visit
5. CP Services signed a four-year deal with the team worth around _____ a year.	a) 14 thousand dollars b) 35 thousand dollars
6. Vern Janvier is the owner of _____.	a) the Jamaican bobsleigh team. b) a northern Alberta oilsands company.

Discussion Questions

What is your favorite Olympic sport? Why? Do you prefer the Summer or Winter Olympic games?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
	1) available	a) workers staff
	2) salaries	b) same comparable
	3) similar	c) ready to be seen accessible
	4) significantly	d) decrease drop
	5) employees	e) created by reason
	6) come down	f) compensation wages
	7) caused by	g) great amount a lot

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

level off – to stop increasing or decreasing; to stay at one level

jumped – to increase a large amount very quickly

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **True** or **False**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Everyone likes the idea of Alberta's first 'sunshine list.'
2. The 'sunshine list' is a list of the top 100 salaries in Alberta.
3. One professor says making this list available may raise salaries.
4. Employees could use this available information to ask for higher salaries.
5. While salaries did jump in Ontario, Fildebrandt says it was not only because of the 'sunshine list.'
6. The Alberta Government is discussing whether salaries will decrease or remain the same.

Discussion Questions

Why do you think some people are interested in which provincial employees are making over \$100,000? Do you think it is fair to share this information on the Internet?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

posted (put up on a website)	adjusting (changing a little)
assessed (tested or measured)	personalized (written just for one person)
process (step by step actions)	
trustees (person elected to the school board)	
report cards (written summary of a child's progress in school)	

Use one of the vocabulary words above to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. I was very happy when I read my son's _____ because I could see he was doing so well in school.
2. When my daughter was _____ in math, she scored 100%.
3. I have never met any of the school board _____ but I think it is important to call their office when I am worried about a decision they make.
4. My sister _____ a photograph of our family party on Facebook so our friends and family back home could see everyone having fun.
5. I am _____ my diet so I eat a few more fruits and vegetables and less candy.
6. The _____ for getting a driving license is quite long but you can read about it online.
7. My favourite birthday gift was a _____ mug on which my grandchildren had written my name and put a photograph of our family.

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

Exemplary: Excellent, a very high standard

Evident: Satisfactory, possible to see

Emerging: Not quite there, possible to see the beginning of something

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. How is the Calgary public school board getting out the information about new report cards?
2. How many levels of achievement will there be in the new report cards?
3. Which grades will these new report cards be for?
4. In addition to the new levels, what other information will be given on the new report cards?

Discussion Questions

What kind of information would you like to see on your child's report cards? How do report cards in Canada differ to your experience of report cards in your home country?

Identifying Adverbs

Adverbs are words that describe or give more information about verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. We use adverbs to enhance ideas or help us describe how, when, where, how much or how often an action was performed.

Adverbs usually (but not always) end in the suffix 'ly'. The ones that end in 'ly' are easy to identify.

Adverbs can come in many different places in a sentence. They often come before or after the verb or adjective they are modifying, but they can also come at the beginning or at the end of a sentence.

Look at examples from the stories this week. The arrows will help you understand what the adverb is modifying.

“Jamaica's bobsleigh team will **likely** not win a medal but they are getting a lot of attention **anyway**.”

“He says it's something he's dreamed of **ever** **since** watching *Cool Runnings*.”

“York University professor Richard Leblanc says salaries in Ontario increased **significantly** after that province introduced its sunshine list.”

Here are some adverbs that do not end in 'ly' (and a few exceptions):

To describe how or how much: almost, alone, badly, bright, even, ever, extremely, hard, late, little, much, not, quite, rather, really, so, still, terribly, too, very, well

To describe when: after, afterwards, already, annually, before, daily, during, finally, just, last, never, next, now, recently, soon, since, still, then, today, tomorrow, weekly, when, yesterday

To describe where: abroad, anywhere, away, everywhere, here, home, in, inside, out, outside, somewhere, there, underground, upstairs

To describe how often: always, every, likely, usually, often, sometimes, occasionally, seldom, rarely, never

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

	FEBRUARY 7 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, I'm Rosa Marchitelli and you're listening to Learning English with CBC for February 7 th .	0:00
Story 1	The Winter Olympics have begun in Sochi, Russia. These are the 22 nd winter Olympics. Four years ago the games were held in Vancouver, and Canada won the highest number of gold medals with 14. Jamaica's bobsleigh team will likely not win a medal but they are getting a lot of attention anyway. A movie called <i>Cool Runnings</i> was made about Jamaican bobsledders at the 1988 Calgary Olympics, and that movie has inspired a northern Alberta oilsands company to sponsor the Jamaican bobsleigh team in Sochi. CP Services has signed a four-year deal with the team worth around 35 thousand dollars a year. Vern Janvier is owner of the company. He says it's something he's dreamed of ever since watching <i>Cool Runnings</i> .	0:10
Story 2	The Calgary public school board has posted a video on its website to help parents better understand the new report cards. CBE schools are adjusting to Alberta Education's new programs of study. Instead of letter or number grades in Kindergarten through grade nine, students will be assessed with terms like exemplary, evident and emerging. The CBE says teachers will also give personalized comments for each student. Some schools are already using it - others are working with parents on report cards. The CBE has posted information and a video of a presentation to trustees this week to explain the process.	01:23
Story 3	There are different opinions on Alberta's first ever 'sunshine list'. A list of all provincial employees making 100 thousand dollars and more is now available on the internet. But a professor who studied a similar list in Ontario, says it may raise salaries. York University professor Richard Leblanc says salaries in Ontario increased significantly after that province introduced its sunshine list, because employees used the information to ask for more pay. Derek Fildebrandt, with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, agrees salaries have jumped in Ontario, but says it was not only caused by the sunshine list. In Alberta, the government isn't saying salaries will level off or come down.	02:17

Appendix: Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
h	1. medal	a) person or company that gives money and support to someone
j	2. bobsleigh	b) attract people; have people's focus
b	3. get attention	c) a person who has a business
f	4. inspire	d) in any case; anyhow
a	5. sponsor	e) amount of money or value something has
i	6. deal	f) to give someone an idea or motivation
e	7. worth	g) to put your signature on something; to complete a contract
c	8. owner	h) prize for winning a competition
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Listening

1. The _____ winter Olympics have begun in Sochi, Russia.	a) twenty second b) twentieth
2. Four years ago, Canada won _____ medals at the winter Olympics.	a) 14 goal b) 14 gold
3. The movie <i>Cool Runnings</i> was about _____ in the 1988 Olympics.	a) Jamaica's bobsleigh team b) Calgary's bobsleigh team
4. An Albertan oilsands company was inspired by the movie to _____ the Jamaican team in Russia.	a) sponsor b) visit
5. CP Services signed a four-year deal with the team worth around _____ a year.	a) 14 thousand dollars b) 35 thousand dollars
6. Vern Janvier is the owner of _____.	a) the Jamaican bobsleigh team. b) a northern Alberta oilsands company.

News story 2

Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
c	1) available	a) workers staff
f	2) salaries	b) same comparable
b	3) similar	c) ready to be seen accessible
g	4) significantly	d) decrease drop
a	5) employees	e) created by reason
d	6) come down	f) compensation wages
e	7) caused by	g) great amount a lot

Listening

1. F Everyone likes the idea of Alberta's first 'sunshine list.'
2. F The 'sunshine list' is a list of the top 100 salaries in Alberta.
3. T One professor says making this list available may raise salaries.
4. T Employees could use this available information to ask for higher salaries.
5. T While salaries did jump in Ontario, Fildebrandt says it was not only because of the 'sunshine list.'
6. F The Alberta Government is discussing whether salaries will decrease or remain the same.

News story 3

Vocabulary

1. I was very happy when I read my son's report card because I could see he was doing so well in school.
2. When my daughter was assessed in math, she scored 100%.
3. I have never met any of the school board trustees but I think it is important to call their office when I am worried about a decision they make.
4. My sister posted a photograph of our family party on Facebook so our friends and family back home could see everyone having fun.
5. I am adjusting my diet so I eat a few more fruits and vegetables and less candy.

6. The process for getting a driving license is quite long but you can read about it online.
7. My favourite birthday gift was a personalized mug on which my grandchildren had written my name and put a photograph of our family.

Listening

1. How is the Calgary public school board getting out the information about new report cards? They are posting information and a video on their website.
2. How many levels of achievement will there be in the new report cards? Three
3. Which grades will these new report cards be for? Kindergarten to Grade 9
4. In addition to the new levels, what other information will be given on the new report cards? Personalized comments from the teacher.